Amount due from Private Airline Operators

99. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total amount due till date from the existing private airline operators to the AAI (Airports Authority of India)/Department of Civil Aviation;

(b) what is the total amount outstanding against those private airlines which have stopped their operations completely, year-wise till date for the last three years; and

(c) in what manner AAI propose to recover outstanding amount from above defaulting companies both existing and from those who have stopped their operation?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) The total amount due from the existing private airlines operators to the Airports Authority of India is Rs. 996.59 lakhs till date.

(b) The total amount outstanding against the private airlines which have stopped their operations completely is Rs. 1732.13 lakhs for 1996-97; Rs. 1781.44 lakhs for 1997-98 and Rs. 2111.26 lakhs for 1998-99 upto 31.10.99.

(c) AAI has initiated action under the Public Premises Eviction Act, 1971 and also initiated legal proceeding in Law Court for recovery of such dues.

Steps to curtail losses of Air India

100. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any effective steps to check the operating losses of Air India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have decided any wage cut or VRS for Air India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Air India Limited has taken the following steps to improve the financial performance:—

(i) Marketing efforts have been stepped up to generate additional revenue. (ii) Network rationalization and consolidation with emphasis placed on route profitability. (iii) Reduction in expenditure on outside repairs of aircraft by undertaking more in-house repairs. (iv) Several posts of India based officers abroad have been abolished. (v) Freeze on external recruitment in non-operational categories. (vi) Two voluntary schemes have been notified *viz.* shorter working week scheme and leave without pay/allowances scheme for a period of two years extendable upto five years.

The Disinvestment Commission in its VIII Report on Air India *inter alia* has recommended infusion of Government equity of Rs. 1000 crores and induction of a strategic partner on the basis of global bids. The recommendations of the Commission are under consideration of the Government.

(c) and (d) No, Sir, the matter is within the competence of Air India management.

Scam in encashment of Kisan Vikas Patras and National Saving Certificates

101. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Central audit into the functioning of several postal circles in the country has revealed a major scam involving fraudulent encashment and missing Kisan Vikas Patras (KVPs) and National Saving Certificates (NSCs) worth nearly Rs. 153 crores;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed to be taken to recover these illegal and fraudulent payments and to bring the offenders to book; and

(c) what is Government's reaction to the reported suggestions by the CAG to transfer the sale of these certificates to the banking sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Savings certificates including Kisan Vikas Patras (KVPs), Indira Vikas Patras